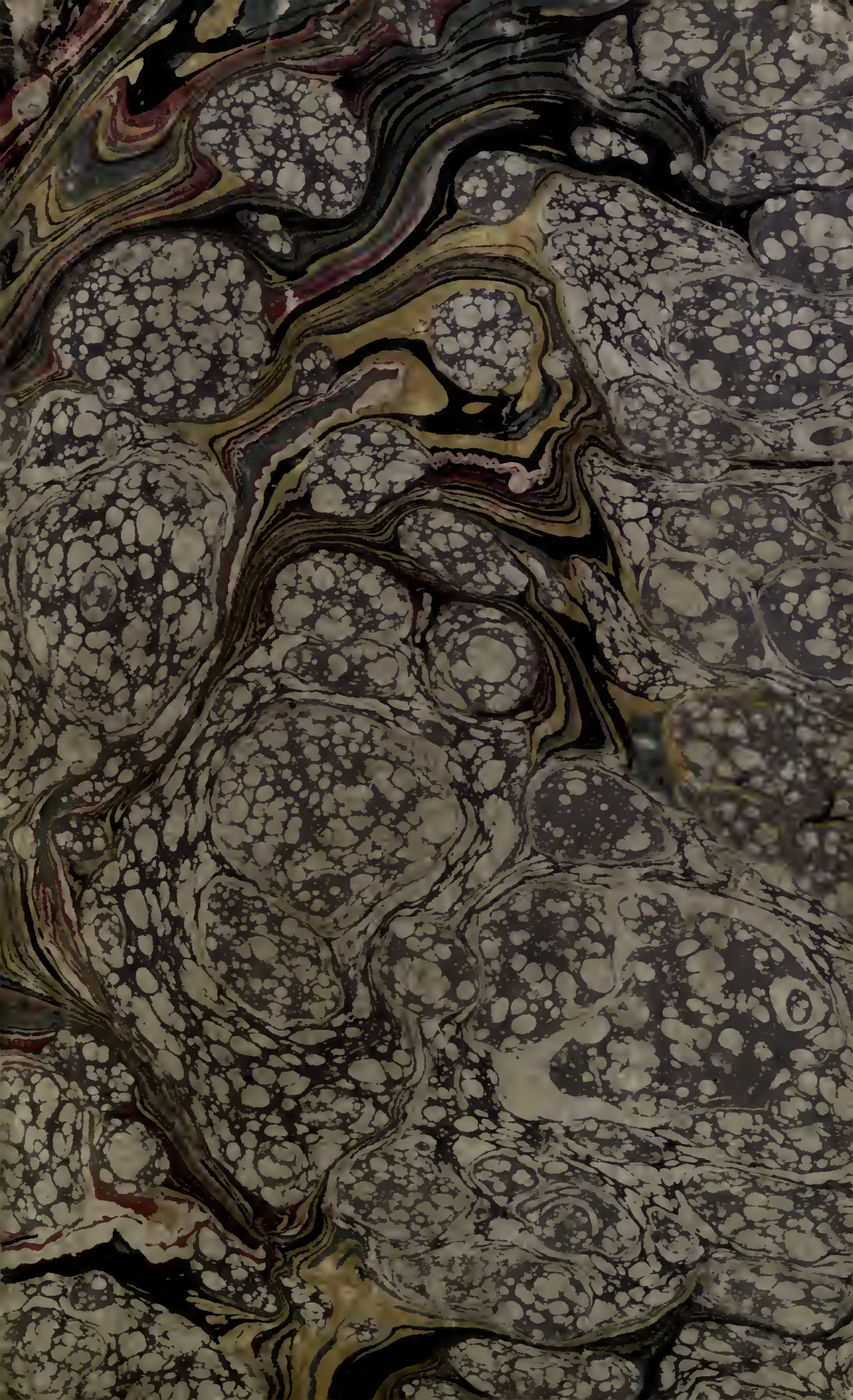

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MEMOIRS

OF

DICK, THE LITTLE PONEY,

Supposed to be written by himself.

Hound del.t J. Scott. sculp.t

The Foolish Frolick and its Consequences.

MEMOIRS

OF

DICK,

THE LITTLE PONEY,

Supposed to be written by himself;

AND PUBLISHED FOR THE

INSTRUCTION AND AMUSEMENT OF GOOD BOYS AND GIRLS.

LONDON:

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1800.

TO

THE HOPEFUL SONS

OF

THE MOST NOBLE THE MARQUIS OF B——

THIS LITTLE VOLUME

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY

THEIR SINCERE WELL-WISHER,

AND OBEDIENT

HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE EDITOR.

Dec. 14, 1799.

PREFACE.

WITHOUT pretending to be the identical horse of knowledge, which some years ago instructed or amused so many of the human race, I trust the following Memoirs of my checquered life will prove that I am not wholly uncultivated, or have been an inattentive observer of human manners. And if my strictures tend to procure more uniform favour to my kind, or to soften one obdurate heart among the lords of creation, I shall not regret that I have written, nor will my history be read without improvement.

DICK, THE LITTLE PONEY.

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MEMOIRS

MEMOIRS

OF

DICK, THE LITTLE PONEY.

CHAP. I.

BIRTH AND PARENTAGE.

THE public is naturally inquisitive respecting the origin of those who have played a conspicuous part in the drama of life. The minutest incident of the early age of such characters is traced with avidity, and recorded with satisfaction; but some of the greatest heroes that have ap-

peared on the stage of the world are in the same predicament with myself—unable or unwilling to bring forward their father to participate in the reflected honours of his posterity.

For my part, however, I should be happy to indulge curiosity, could it be done consistently with truth; but I really never knew my sire, though there is great reason to suppose he filled as good a station as most of his race, and enjoyed more felicity than has generally fallen to my chequered lot, if I except my present circumstances. There can be no doubt that he was of Cambrian origin, and tasted the sweets of liberty and independence on the lofty mountains of

that

that romantic country. Happy, perhaps, had it been for me had it been my fortune to have been born to the same inheritance; but some months before I came into the world, my dam, as she has informed me with visible emotion, was bought up by a drover, and forced from her native haunts. In crossing a river, in her way to England, it seems she made an effort to regain her freedom, and snapping the halter by which she was tied to the tail of another animal of her species, to the great danger of carrying away that member of her comrade, she plunged into the stream, and was with difficulty saved from drowning. Had she met with her fate on this occasion I should

have been unknown, and her adventures would also have terminated, perhaps, for the happiness of both. Yet life is not without its charms, and the most miserable reluctantly resign it. To preserve existence is the strongest impulse of nature: it is the passion that is first felt, and the last that is abandoned.

The string to which she belonged was gradually lessened, by some of her companions being sold in every market-town through which they passed. It was her fortune, however, not to find a purchaser till she came to Hounslow, as she was visibly not in a condition to endure labour. At that little town she was bought up by a farmer, and turned on

the spacious heath in the vicinity, where I first saw the light, and learned the few previous incidents of my being, I might have embellished and expanded them, with extrinsic observations; but, if this chapter is uninteresting, it has at least the merit of being short.

CHAP. II.

HOUNSLOW HEATH—A ROBBERY—REFLECTIONS ON MONEY.

NOTHING could be more agreeable than the first months of my life. Spring had covered the common with a profusion of beauties. The furze was tender and sweet to the taste; the herbage, though coarse, was, in the estimation of my dam, equal to the best on the Cambrian-hills; and as she suckled me with extreme tenderness, I fancied that the world was a scene of unvarying pleasure. The deception, however, was not of long duration. Spring

and summer quickly, too quickly, passed away; winter began to strip the waste of its covering; food became more and more scarce; and, to add to my sufferings, my dam, thinking she had done enough for me, began to deny me the teat often when I wished for it; and not a hovel sheltered me from the cold.

One dark and dismal night I shall never forget. As I was lying by the side of my dam, not far from the road, we were alarmed by the shrieks of human beings, and heard a carriage stop. Till this moment I had no idea that man was an enemy to man. From what I had seen, I began to learn that he claimed superiority over the rest of the creation;

but I could not suppose that the strong of the human race tyrannized over the weak, or that the arm of violence was lifted up against the defenceless. After a short period of terror and confusion on the road, a man mounted on one of my species, rode furiously towards the place where we lay, and, as it was extremely dark, tumbled over us before we could get out of his way, or he perceive the danger of the unwelcome interruption; of course we were much alarmed, but happily escaped injury. The chaise was still stationary; the fall of the horseman was heard; the post-boy, and a person who, it appeared, had been robbed, leaving some ladies, who were loud

in solicitations to restrain their impetuosity, rushed to the spot; and before the stunned robber could recover himself, seized him as he lay on the ground, and dragged him to the carriage. I heard it observed, that it was the most fortunate thing in the world the little mare and her foal lay in the position they did; and we came in for some share of thanks and praise, as being, though unintentionally and unwittingly, the means of stopping a plunderer, and of recovering what was lost.

The spoil which had tempted this daring man to risk his life, was contained in what mankind call a *purse*. I never could understand why they attached so much importance to so

small

small an object. Never in my life did I see any thing drawn from it which served for food or raiment; it seemed always to contain white, yellow, or brown little pieces of metal, of no more value in my mind than the stones and pebbles which mend the roads; yet I have since learned that more than half of the quarrels which disturb the lords of the creation, more than half the crimes they commit, originate from too eager a desire to possess those apparently useless baubles. Indeed I have frequently observed the most pitiable human object assume the look of happiness, when one of those least attractive pieces was bestowed on his entreaties. Men are, no doubt, wiser

than

than horses: a poney must not attempt to account for what they do; yet I must confess, that of all the mysteries which have amused or confounded me, the insatiable desire of what is called *money* to me is the most inexplicable.

But to return from this digression; Hounslow-heath, though the scene of my nativity, every day became more uncomfortable. I anticipated I did not know what. I felt the ills of cold and scanty fare; but still I enjoyed liberty, and that palliated every inconvenience. I began, however, to dread I should not long possess this inestimable portion. I had seen my kind in numbers yoked to carriages of every sort, or bearing

proud

proud masters on their backs; and I concluded that my youth and diminutive size would not long protect me from similar toils and insults. The period of opening reflection was painful enough, but I did not long undergo the pangs of incertitude; I was soon waked to dreadful realities, as the sequel will sufficiently evince.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

STOLEN BY GYPSIES—SUFFERINGS—AND ADVENTURES WITH THIS FRATERNITY.

FOR some days I had observed a horde of miserable looking human beings, who had pitched their tents on the heath, eying me with particular regard. At last they brought me some hay, which, after overcoming the timidity natural to a stranger, I ate from their hands. By degrees they began to be more familiar; they patted by back, scratched my head and neck with their long nails; and, in short, seemed to interest themselves so much in my welfare, that I, being

ignorant of the wiles of men, easily fell into their lure, and discovered their artifice too late. Proffered kindness is seldom sincere. Pleasure or profit generally lurks at the bottom of voluntary attentions.

My dam, however, though her affections were in a considerable degree lost or alienated, frequently gave me her warning voice, to recal me from danger; and evinced, by her own shyness, a suspicion of my new friends. Her admonitions, alas! were thrown away. Young and unthinking, I suffered myself, after being a few days fondled and fed by the designing wretches, to be haltered and led away. Maternal tenderness seemed revived at this parting scene;

scene; for though my dam was too well acquainted with the world to permit herself to be inveigled, she followed my steps with her eyes, she expressed the warmest feelings of nature, and in language which I now too well understood, bade me an eternal adieu.

The gypsies, who in fact had stolen me, though I never knew my real owner, dreading detection and punishment, struck their tents at the close of day; and travelling all night, encamped next morning under a high hedge, at a considerable distance from the habitations of men. I now discovered however, that I was not wholly secluded from the society of my kind. I observed two

or three little horses belonging to the party; and as my new masters purloined plenty of hay from a neighbouring rick, and fed us without stint, I began to be reconciled to my situation, though the halter was still galling to my free-born spirit.—Restraint and submission are always irksome at first; though often I believe it is happier to obey than command.

I did not long enjoy even a fancied melioration of circumstances in any respect. The gypsies having been guilty of one crime in stealing me, to prevent a discovery, aggravated it by cruelty. One deviation from rectitude commonly draws numbers in its train. They cut the hair

of

of my tail and mane in such a manner as completely to disguise me: they next proceeded to an operation, the exquisite torture and fatal consequences of which I still feel in reflection, though delicacy forbids me to explain it. Nature produced me a male, but my tyrants were not satisfied with her decrees, and they deprived me of all the privileges of my sex, except those of mere existence. Though now long versed in the ways of men, many particulars of their conduct, and this for one, are still beyond my simple comprehension. I submit, however, to destiny. The master ought to be more intelligent than the servant; and if the former abuses his know-

ledge and his power, in the revolution of events he will certainly be called to an account.—This ought to furnish consolation to the oppressed: the reign of tyranny cannot last for ever.

It was many days before I was able to walk without extreme anguish; but my masters having given offence to a farmer in the neighbourhood, by pulling up his hedge-stakes, and being too justly suspected of other depredations on his property, they were obliged to shift their quarters; and I was dragged along by them, regardless of my sufferings and my pains. At last I recovered my health and some share of spirits; and now I thought that in-

ingenious malice had no more ills to inflict on me, and that the cup of my calamities was full. I promised myself all I wanted—food without toil, and peace, if I was deprived of enjoyment. But to my sorrow I discovered that I was yet a novice in misery. As soon as I was able to bear the slightest burden, a ragged boy, furnished with a switch to hasten my speed, was placed on my back; and when I had gained a little more strength, a couple of paniers were substituted for this easy burden, and sometimes I was obliged to carry a family of children at once.

To detail all my adventures with this roving race of human beings, during

during the space of two years, would swell my memoirs to an undue length; and yet if I am not misinformed, less important ones have been written and read with pleasure. I must do the gypsies however the justice to say, that, except being obliged to labour, before I had acquired sufficient strength, and their previous cruelties already enumerated, to which perhaps I should have been doomed in any other hands, they treated me with kindness and attention. However hardly they fared themselves, I was constantly supplied with what my simple appetites craved. Nature has been more indulgent to quadrupeds than to men. Grass grows and water

ter runs every where. We are furnished with clothing, which they must procure by labour and art; and we are also exempt from the miserable ambition of filling a *purse*. We draw on the GREAT PARENT for what our appetites crave; and the supplies are generally in proportion to the exigency that demands them.

In the company of the gypsies I visited several of the midland counties of England; but being insulated from the world, I gained little knowledge of life, while I remained in their society. It is well known they avoid living near towns. The most sequestered spots are generally preferred, both that they may plunder with

with more facility, and that they may enjoy the independence which they love. They associate only with their own tribe, and here their fidelity and affection are exemplary; but being useless to the rest of the world, and almost proscribed by it, they enter into none of its amusements, they follow few of its pursuits. They live at the expense of those who despise them; insult or injury they bear with apparent submission, and humility of condescension; but their conduct breathes the pride of defiance. After the fairest professions of abstaining from the usual petty shifts by which they subsist, reproof and advice have only stimulated them to opposition; and whenever a farmer in the vicinity

of

of the encampment was more than commonly strict, they used to take revenge by turning me and my companions into his corn. This however was generally done under the cover of night, and escaped detection; but the sequel will show that dishonesty and injustice will not always escape the punishment they deserve.

CHAP. IV.

THE VILLAGE POUND — INCIDENTS — DOCKING AND CROPPING — REFLECTIONS.

IT was now the most delightful season of the year, and the third revolution of it I had beheld, when being quartered on a barren plain, in the vicinity of enclosures, a surly farmer would scarcely allow us the privilege of air and water. The gypsey crew were outwardly very civil, and deprecated his vengeance; but inwardly plotted revenge, as they thought their established prescriptive rights were invaded.—

Usurped

Usurped rights long enjoyed are frequently claimed as a legitimate inheritance, at least this principle may be justly applied to the gypsies.

Having determined to move next morning to a more hospitable and genial spot, they turned all their cattle into a field of wheat, just coming into blossom; and during the night we fed, till satiated nature rejected more indulgence. For my part, I had so overloaded my stomach, that forgetting my danger, I strayed to a corner of the ground, and lay down to sleep. My masters searched for me with the utmost anxiety: they had found my companions, and were ready to depart; but unwilling to leave me behind, they protracted

their departure, till, as ill luck would have it, the owner of the field taking his morning perambulation that way, found me snug in my lair, and unable to run for it, from being too much gorged with food—such are the fatal effects of excess! Indeed not suspecting the consequences which ensued, I lay quiet till he had procured a servant with a halter; who making me secure, conducted me to a small enclosure, called the village pound, into which I was put without a blade of grass to eat, or a drop of water to drink. I had now leisure to ruminate on the folly of unlimited indulgence; and if at first I suffered from repletion, hunger soon began to balance accounts with me;

me ; and I could have feasted on the scanty produce of the common with rapture. How long my imprisonment was to continue I knew not. Indeed I feared I might be doomed to starvation ; as for many hours none of my gypsey friends appeared.

However, towards the close of day, several idle children flocked round me. All seemed to admire me, and several wished to get upon my back. Tamed by misfortune, and hoping they would offer me some sustenance, I submitted to carry one or two of the most daring, round and round the pound ; but not a mouthful of grass did they tender me as a reward. At length a little boy and a girl, better dressed than the rest,

came up; and after calling me a pretty little creature, and lamenting my confinement, went and plucked some grass which they gave me.—Soon after leaving me, they ran and called their father's groom, whom they benevolently importuned to carry me some hay and water, and accompanied him themselves, that they might enjoy the satisfaction of seeing the object they relieved. In some natures goodness and humanity are inherent. Why have not I the power to record in my humble memoirs, the names of those charming children? Why did I not fall into such kind hands at first? But I have since found their counterparts, and ought to be content.—Uniform prosperity

perity I have found is not the lot of any thing that breathes; and even merit, after years of toil does not always gain the palm which is its due: my services to mankind as yet had been few; and though fortune is sometimes capricious, and bestows favours as a gratuitous advance rather than as an earnest reward, I did not find her thus propitious to me.

When it was getting quite dark, the chief of the gypsey gang came and paid the ransom of my deliverance. It seems the farmer was not insensible of the voluntary depredations they had committed, and made them pay the utmost farthing that justice could demand; and threatened farther that they should be sent to a

covered pound, where they confine men, not only from grass and water as I was, but almost from air and light. Escaping however rather on account of the expence and trouble that would have attended putting his measure in execution, than from any sentiments of humanity, the party, impoverished and disgraced, moved to a distant part of the country; and regarding me as the prime cause, though the innocent one, of their misfortunes, planned new scenes of torture for me, and new means of reimbursement for themselves.

In short, they determined to sell me to the best bidder; and to prepare me for the fair, they began with cropping my ears, and cutting my tail

tail to a stump. This operation was painful enough, but I was now habituated to suffering: and though it deadened my sense of hearing, and gave the flies the power to harass me with impunity, I submitted without complaining; and indeed thought myself happy that custom had not sanctioned more extensive amputations.

Ye tasteless sons of men! is Nature such a bungling performer, that her works must submit to your improvements in almost every instance? Why do you not practise the same experiments on yourselves? But perhaps you will say, Nature has given you nothing in vain, that you are turned out perfect from her hands,

and

and that none of your members require mutilation to increase your beauty or utility. If you would listen to the poney, he would tell you that Nature has been equally bountiful to his kind: and that you can deprive them of nothing, but what diminishes their comforts, without increasing their utility or advantage to you.

CHAP. V.

CURIOUS REFLECTIONS—DICK DESCRIBES HIMSELF—IS TAKEN TO A FAIR, AND SOLD.

HITHERTO I had seen little of the world. The gypseys, as I have already observed, appear to have scarcely any intercourse with it: and, of course, while I followed their fortunes, I was subject to their circumstances. Had vanity been a leading feature in my disposition, I should, like other heroes who are the trumpeters of their own fame, have thrown a veil over this degrading connexion, this humble introduction into life.—

But

But I plume myself on this very part of my history, which the unthinking may impute to me as a disgrace.—When I reflect on the eminence to which I have since risen, and what honourable masters I have carried, the original meanness of my condition only serves to give a lustre to my good qualities. It is evident, if I rose, it was by merit alone: if I was esteemed, it was because I was useful. The general tenor of my conduct has raised me to what I now am, and I wish my readers to aim at similar rewards by similar means. They need not then blush at the retrospect, however humble their birth.

Before I proceed farther in my memoirs, it may gratify the public

to know something of my form and appearance. Egotism, I am well aware, is justly ridiculed; yet if I withhold information myself, in a short time it will be lost to the world for ever. I shall therefore lay aside false delicacy, and describe myself in terms I have since heard my owners frequently do.

At this eventful period, when I was in a state of preparation for the fair, I was rising four years old; but by an artifice well known among dealers. I was made to appear a year older. In short, my foal teeth were knocked out, on purpose to enhance my value, and to deceive the dupes to false appearances.

The

The intentions of nature were again violated; but this was a trivial circumstance, and only comes under the denomination of a little *jockeyship*. Though all deception must be criminal, among mankind it is only laughed at when dexterously performed.—in a few moments I passed from four to five years of age, but there I stuck for twelve months, though the seasons revolved as before. My height was a little better than twelve hands, and my colour a dappled grey, with a silver mane and tail of exquisite beauty before they were curtailed. My head was somewhat of a lighter hue than the rest of my body, and my legs were rather darker. In form and proportions, I was reckoned a model

of

of perfection; great strength in proportion to my size, was united with elegance of make; and though all my paces were yet wild and untutored, I was swift of foot, and sure. Notwithstanding all the injuries and indignities I had undergone, my spirit was still unbroken, and I showed, what is called, blood in my appearance, as well as in my action.

Such were the qualities and figure of my reader's humble servant Dick, when he was taken to the fair. Why I was called Dick, I know not. The appellation was given me when in the society of the vagrants, who principally bred me up; and it was transferred and continued to each successive owner.

After being so long accustomed to comparative solitude, judge what was my surprise, at being introduced into the society of some hundreds of my species, in the middle of a populous town. Their neighings, or rather their lamentations, for the loss of their former associates; the barking of dogs; the hum of business, and the swearing of dealers, quite confounded me; and, for a time I fancied myself transported into another world. By degrees, however, I recovered myself a little, to attend to the novel scene; and, indeed, I was not long permitted to indulge in my reverie. The master gypsey, who held me in a halter, was desired by several persons to walk me out;

he was then asked my price; but as I have before avowed my complete ignorance of the mysteries of monied transactions, as they are called, I can give no explanation of the terms that were used. I only recollect that seven guineas were asked for me, and five repeatedly bidden. At last a gentleman, not a common dealer, came up, made many inquiries if I had been broke, and how I carried, what paces I went, if I was very quiet, and many interrogatories of similar import; all which were answered in the most positive manner, to give him satisfaction; though I afterwards knew to my cost, that half of my pretended qualities were, at that time, absolutely false. In-

deed my heart misgave me when I heard terms used to which I had been unaccustomed. I began to suspect that new calamities awaited me. I saw other animals of my species, though much larger and stronger, curbed with something in the mouth, bearing a saddle on their back, and treading on iron, to all which I was an utter stranger, and wished to continue so. The gentleman had a little boy with him, who liked my appearance so much that he prevailed on his father to give what was asked; and a purse being pulled out, containing some pieces of yellow metal, my late master parted with me for as many of them as he could have held between his finger and his thumb;

thumb; and, wishing the new purchaser good luck with me, left me to my destiny, with every symptom of delight, and without casting a parting look of regard. On my part, I felt some regret at the separation. From long acquaintance, I had contracted some degree of affection for the party; and though my present owner seemed a being of another class, I received no pleasure from the prospect of promotion to a higher sphere. The idea of change may please youthful levity and inexperience; but it is not always productive of happiness.

CHAP. VI.

BRIDLED AND SADDLED — CRUELLY SPURRED—THROWS HIS YOUNG MASTER—MORALIZES ON HIS IMPRUDENCE.

I HAD now the honour, for the first time, to be taken into a stable, at an inn of the town. I was tied up to a manger, supplied with hay and oats; but my appetite was quite gone. Oats I had been unaccustomed to eat, except as they grew in the fields, and for a long time I did not much relish them in the manner they were served up; but I could not help reflecting on the liberal manner in which I was now sup-

supplied, and the assiduity with which I was attended. I contrasted the style of living of my late masters with what now fell to my lot, and I was lost in astonishment. I could not help thinking that man was, in many instances, kinder to my species than to his own. What returns I was to make for all this apparent attention, even to prevent my wishes, and to exceed my wants, I was yet to learn; but my suspense was not of long duration. I had, till now, lived something in a state of nature, and enjoyed a great degree of liberty: I now felt the rigour of restraint, and commenced an artificial existence, of which the race of men with whom

I was

I was now connected set me an example.

Scarcely had I rested an hour in the stable, which to my simple apprehension, appeared too grand for a quadruped to inhabit, before my young master came, booted and spurred, to see me ; and the groom clapping a saddle on my back, which I submitted to, in hopes it was the only burden I had to carry, afterwards put a bridle into my mouth, and led me out into the yard.

My sensations at this moment of my life I cannot describe. I was girded till I could scarcely breathe. I had only a piece of iron to chew ; and when my young rider mounted me, he pulled the reins so hard, that I thought

thought he had it in contemplation to split my jaws asunder. Being awkward, and uneasy myself, and he equally so, it was with difficulty I could comprehend which road he wished me to go. Sometimes he pulled one way, sometimes another; I followed every motion of the curb, both from a sense of pain and a desire to please; but, to my misfortune, I found I was always in the wrong. He cruelly stuck the spurs into my sides, till the blood flowed in streams, merely to show his prowess, and his right to control me. I certainly did not deserve this harsh treatment. Though never used to such trappings, and such modes of compulsion, I would have gone to his mind, had he known

known how to direct me; but he was conceited and ignorant, and evinced his power only by its abuse. Would superiority be loved or respected, it must use very gentle and conciliatory means to have even its lawful claims allowed, and cheerfully obeyed.

The father seeing the distress and passion of his son, and my unacquaintance with the menage, cursed the gypsey for deceiving him; bid the youngster take care, and not provoke me to rear up, till he got home; and that he would put me into proper hands to break me for his use. I was léd out of the town, and it was now imagined all danger was at an end; but when my rider was again left to the command of the reins and

the

the use of his spurs, he showed so little discretion or mercy, that I was tempted to assert the rights of nature, and to retaliate the injuries I had received. The most stupid animal is not insensible to kindness, but revolts from oppression.

A carriage passing furiously along, gave me an excuse for starting aside, unexpectedly; the rider was thus thrown from his seat and tossed into the ditch. I did not stop, the reader may suppose, to see how little master got up; but setting out full speed with the reins hanging down, I soon entangled my feet, and had they not snapped, I must have been overtaken, and punished on the spot. Every person I met attempted to seize me; the

the hue and cry followed me; but I eluded every stratagem to catch me; and animated by resentment, felt my consequence in the scale of being, and proudly triumphed in my liberty. Vain, silly creature that I was! I was yet ignorant of the superiority of man, and the necessity of implicit submission to his will. The provocation I had received might have justified revenge, but it was certainly very impolitic to exercise it. It is wisdom in an inferior not to feel the injury which it cannot redress with effect. The dictates of passion are always wrong; and though all natures are susceptible of resentment, in a greater or less degree, patient acquiescence, docility and mildness,

will

will generally secure better treatment than a conflict for power, when there can be no equality; and a spirit of opposition, where the weakest knows he must eventually submit.

These maxims had I known to practise before I threw little master into the ditch, would have saved me a world of pain. My exultation at what I had achieved, was of very short continuance. Pursuing the straight road, I soon came to a turnpike gate, where I found myself enclosed. To return, would have been to face my enraged pursuers; to proceed was impossible. After a moment's reflection, I suffered myself to be caught; my owner soon came up, and ordering an ugly looking fel-

low to mount me, and to ride me without mercy to his house, in order to cure me, as he called it, of my tricks, I was quickly sensible of the imprudence of my late conduct; for before I reached the stable which was to be my future lodging, I was ready to expire with the weight of my rider and the violence of his blows. Nor was this all I had to suffer. No sooner did my young master arrive, covered with dirt, and bleeding at the nose, than he took a whip and belaboured me, till I thought he meant to make an end of me. His mother was alarmed when she heard of the misfortunes of her only son; and as he was a spoiled child, instead of checking his fury against me, she rather

rather encouraged it; and hoped and prayed that I might be immediately parted with, lest some worse misfortune should befal her darling.

All my former sufferings seemed trifling to what I now endured. I had forfeited every claim to favour, and could scarcely hope for forgiveness. The first steps generally influence the future character of man or beast; it was visible I had never been broke, but it was suspected I was vicious also. With aching bones, and almost a broken heart, I lay down in my stall, which I would have gladly exchanged for the shelter of a hedge, to which I had been hitherto accustomed. I perceived that I had lost much more than I had gained

by the events of the day. The humble independence of my former life was endeared to me by the painful contrast of my present situation. Sleep fled from my eyes, and morning only came to show me the extent of my sufferings, though they eventually operated to my advancement and ease. How deceitful are appearances! The severest ills are frequently productive of the choicest blessings; but man himself is too short-sighted to pierce into futurity, and prescience of good and evil is still less the attribute of a horse!

CHAP. VII.

THE SQUIRE OF FOXHALL.

WHAT passed in the parlour during the evening, for I had now a master who lived in a house, I can only guess from the circumstances which ensued. It is probable the propriety of keeping or disposing of me was argued with much animation; and this subject was probably as interesting as the general conversation of the family. My mistress had declared her opinion very early, as to what steps ought to be

taken, and the prejudice of a woman is not often overcome; but my young master, notwithstanding he scurvy trick I had played him, liked my figure and size too much to resign me without reluctance; and if he could not silence his mother's fears, he at least prevailed on her to listen to his father's proposition, which was, to employ Tom the horse-breaker, to see what he could make of me; and after a fair trial, to determine whether little master should be allowed to retain me or not. This judicious plan, it seems, was at last agreed on in the conclave; for though there were three persons of opposite dispositions to be consulted, the youngest had always the casting

voice.

voice, whether he was right or wrong. But before I give an account of my proficiency under Tom, to whom I owe so much, though he whipped me soundly into learning, it may be expected I should say a few mords more respecting the family I had now the honour to serve. Though their character is neither novel nor worthy of admiration, it is the first time that it has been delineated by a quadruped; and yet quadrupeds being most conversant with it, are therefore best qualified to do it justice.

I soon discovered that I belonged to no less a man than the 'squire of the parish, who kept his hounds and horses; and, from long and intimate intercourse with them, seem-

ed to partake of the nature of both species. When he was angry, he growled just like a dog; and when he was pleased he partook of the generous spirit of the horse. On the whole, he was what is called a good sort of a country gentleman, that is, a man who is born, lives, and dies on the spot; whose knowledge is confined to his kennel and his stable; who has no idea of pastime beyond field sports, nor of pleasure in society, except in getting drunk; who gives bread and cheese and beer to all comers, and thinks hospitality consists in excess; who damns all upstarts, whether they have risen by merit or not; and prides himself that his family has vegetated for some

some centuries upon the same estate, kept at a distance from courts and courtiers, and neither improved nor wasted their income.

Such was the 'squire of Foxhall. His lady was the daughter of a neighbouring 'squire of similar manners and pursuits; for great care is taken not to change the breed. She had been brought up with care to qualify her for the station she filled; and in any other she would have been as much out of her element, as a jack-ass dancing a jig. They had only one son, my hopeful master, who had now reached his twelfth year; and having received what education was thought requisite for the representative of an ancient family, was

intended

intended next season to be introduced into life, that is, to be taken into the field, and put under the discipline of the huntsman. His voice was already tuned to outyelp all the hounds in the kennel, and he could throw out the interjections of human language with as much emphasis as oldest visitor in the family. His father's friends used to compliment him before his mother, that he was no bastard, but a true chip of the old block; this I only repeat, for I cannot pretend to understand it. In continuation, it will appear that he seemed to consider me as a block, or at least something without feeling. But I have delayed the reader too long from my own more important history.

history. A fox-hunting squire has little pretensions to shine in the annals of fame, nor shall I allot him a larger niche in the temple I am rearing.

CHAP. VIII.

BROKE BY TOM THE RIDER—PUT UPON—THROWS HIM—AND IN CONSEQUENCE IS CONTINUED LONGER AT SCHOOL.

IN consequence of the arrangements that had been made over night, soon after day began to dawn, Tom the horsebreaker appeared; and saddling and bridling me in a particular form led me from the stall, where I had lain warm indeed, but full of distracting apprehensions. These were increased by the figure and apparatus of my jockey. His whip handle was short, but its lash uncom-

uncommonly long and strong; his spurs were so formidable, that, if pushed home to his heel, they would have almost met in my middle; his face was bloated and fiery, and his head was covered with a cap, whose front resembled a pent-house. Resistance to such a formidable opponent, armed for every event, I knew was vain; and I had predetermined to submit to the worst that human malice could inflict.

However, after taking me to be shod, a ceremony which I dreaded would have led to some new amputation, he got upon my back, and gently stroking me, seemed to intimate that the whip and the spur were only to be used in case I prov-

ed refractory. I yielded to his commanding hand with all the adroitness in my power; I was alert in my motions, and careful in my steps, but rather awkward in my new ſhoes; and though he now and then checked me when I was not in fault, and clapped the spur to my side, by way of remembrance, I must confess his first lesson was neither unpleasant nor severe. After exercising me for an hour or two, he put me into the stable, and fed me plentifully. My spirits were a little revived; for then I was ignorant of the cunning of man, who proceeds by gradual steps to show all the malice of his power; first claims voluntary service, and afterwards demands it like a tyrant,

fre-

frequently beyond strength, and generally beyong inclination.

It seems his report of my performance was less favourable than I deserved, as he wished to magnify his services in breaking me, and to keep me longer in subjection, for the sake of his own emolument. I was visited by my young master and his father. The former said, "I was a very pretty creature, and he hoped I should in time be trained to be fit to carry him many a good fox chase. The father agreed as to my appearance, but doubted if I could ever be sufficiently broke. "These cursed gypsies," said he, "have kept him too long. Had he been put under the care of Tom a year or two ago,

he would have been worth any money for your weight." I heard this improving dialogue without seeming to notice it; and, at that time was puzzled, as I well might, to think what a "fox chace" could mean. I knew I was not formed to catch other animals, and could not conceive what purpose it could answer to pursue them. I was then very ignorant, and I am not ashamed to own it.

Next day my lesson was more severe, but still not beyond my powers; and I flattered myself I should soon be master of every part of my duty. The jockey, however, gradually increased the difficulties of my task; and being too heavy for such a diminutive

nutive animal, I suffered extremely when he hastened my pace too much, or put me to difficult leaps. Convinced however by what I had already experienced, that the only way to obtain favour is to give pleasure, I flinched at nothing; and began to retrieve my credit to such a degree, that I was much caressed by my young master, who longed to get upon my back, and try my execution himself. This was by no means permitted, and I was not sorry for it. He had given me a very unfavourable impression of his heart, which I could not overcome: and though I affected to be grateful for his attentions, I was never happy in his presence. Meanwhile I was well fed,

lodged, and groomed; and except during the times of exercise, had nothing to complain of but restraint, which threw a damp over all my other prospects.

Under the tuition of Tom I was now become pretty expert; but, as if he wished to try me beyond my strength, that he might have occasion to blacken my reputation, and keep me longer in hand, he began to force me upon performances for which nature had not qualified me. However, I escaped without much cenſure, till one day he attempted to make me leap a hedge three feet higher than myſelf. Knowing this was beyond my powers, I ſhrunk back; the spurs were applied to my sides with fresh animation;

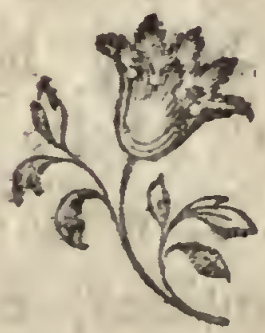
animation; again I recoiled, but in vain; and seeing he was resolved to risk the breaking of my back, or his own neck, self-preservation induced me to take care of myself. When I saw he would not give up the contest, I made an effort to comply with his unreasonable wishes. I rose as high as I could, but my fore-legs not reaching the top of the hedge, I tumbled back, and laid my jockey sprawling behind me.

This was reported so much to my disadvantage, that, not being able to plead my own cause, I was considered as a reftive untractable creature; and the business of my education was almost given up. But Tom, who knew better,

better, though his interest made him speak ill of my talents, obtained permiſſion to try me for two or three weeks more; and, at the end of that time, he had made me so docile, and so perfectly master of all that I had to learn, that he was aſhamed to equivocate any longer, and delivered me over to my young tyrant, with the warmest recommendations of my powers, and many compliments on his own ſkill.

Thus my education was completed; and though the reader will see I had much reason to complain of my tutor's conduct, I was on the whole obliged to him for his care, and am grateful for his instructions

structions. I have heard that mankind are less considerate, and that the pupil too often forgets to whom he was indebted for his acquirements; but, among my species, the sin of ingratitude is yet unknown!



CHAP. IX.

MOUNTED BY THE YOUNG SQUIRE—WHO GETS A BROKEN LEG BY A VERY FOOLISH FREAK—DICK DISGRACED—AND GIVEN TO A FARMER.

THE young squire was now all impatience to mount me; and a consultation being held, he was allowed this felicity in company with his father, who gave him many useful cautions, not so much out of humanity to me, as for fear of danger to his only son. With such a light weight I performed to

to admiration: but, if I knew how to go, he did not know how to ride, and besides he was so fond of using the whip and the spur, that every time he mounted me was a period of trial and of suffering. However, having acquitted myself with so much propriety in the presence of the old squire, who was some check on the folly or inhumanity of the young one; the latter was at last trusted to take me out whenever he pleased. On this part of my life I cannot reflect without horror. So capricious was my young tyrant, that he never got upon my back without being guilty of some cruelty or extravagance. My maxim of implicit obedience, however,

pre-

prevented him from having any just cause to complain; and my prudence saved him from danger. The grand ambition was to leap me over every thing that came in his way; and though this frequently exposed both himself and me to the greateſt riſks, for some time all was right, and my reputation was raised very high in consequence.

His father and mother were now ſo fond of me (for *he* was incapable of affection to any thing), that they daily visited me in the stable; I lived in great style, and was waited on with such assiduity, that I began to think some of the human race were only born to be servants to horses. If I had a hair out of

place,

place, or the least bit of dirt was left on my heels, the groom was rated with the utmost severity; and though he sometimes murmured in private, not a word escaped his lips that savoured of insolence, or opposition to his master's will. If one person, thought I, will exercise such superiority over another of the same species, and force him to condescend to the most degrading offices, without allowing a whisper of complaint to reach his ears, a poney ought to know his station, be thankful for the smallest mark of favour, and bear what is put upon him with patient resignation. From man I certainly learned much, and I resolved to practise what I learned

with attention. But capricious folly I found it impossible to pleaſe.—Instinct and education gave me every quality suitable to my race: and had I been in hands possessed of reason or moral feeling, I might have continued in this service to the end of my days. The fates ordered it otherwise, and I am thankful for their ultimate decision.

I have said that my tyrant delighted in putting me to hazardous leaps, in which I acquitted myself with uncommon propriety and adroitness. At last a new freak seized him; and being in a field where several cows were lying on the ground at intervals from each other,

other, he took it into his head to make me leap over them in succession. I got over three or four without danger, but coming to one that was alarmed at the unusual feat, and in the act of rising, I was lifted on her back, and all three were overset, and thrown different ways. The cow falling on my rider's leg, snapped it in two; and, as soon as I recovered myself, I ran towards the stable with all the speed in my power. The groom seeing me without my rider; instantly alarmed the family. The misfortune which had happened to the young squire was soon discovered: but he palliated his own folly by charging me with restiveness, which had I really ſhown,

perhaps I might have saved him from a broken limb. No witnesses were present to vouch for my innocence; I was condemned without mercy; my credit was lost for ever with such prejudiced judges: and I verily believe the squire would have ſhot me in his rage, had not a good honeſt farmer been present, who, begging me of him, was told he might take me, and be d——d; but advised to ensure his neck for the benefit of his family, if ever he got upon my back.

CHAP. X.

RODE TO MARKETS BY THE FARMER—WHO GETS DRUNK—SOLD FOR THE USE OF A YOUNG LADY.

SOME are ignorant enough to imagine that a horse has no sensibility, and he is too frequently treated as if this were really the case; but mine was moſt exquiſite on this critical occaſion. I did not indeed ſo much dread the event, as regret that I was unjuſtly traduced. Emancipation from ſuch a maſter would have been agreeable

on any terms: no change could increase my discomforts; but the loss of reputation, and the imputed fault which I did not deserve, affected me in the most poignant manner. However, I had to console myself with the reflection, that, among the lords of the creation, as I underſtand, one frequently suffers for the fault of another; and that the loudeſt tongue, and the most depraved heart, are generally most successful in wiping off aspersions from themselves. Nature had denied me the power of pleading my own cause, or retorting on the aggressor the injuſtice he had done me; and I verily believe, had I been capable of speech, I despised the false accuser too much to utter a word

word in my own behalf. A noble spirit will not sink to altercation with the dastardly and the false.—Time, I trusted, would do away the impressions to my discredit, which originated solely from malignity; or that the tenor of my future conduct would give it the lie. From long observation on life, I believe this is the best mode of defence under unmerited aspersion. Man may think and act otherwise: I bow to his superior wisdom, without implicitly deigning to follow the maxims, by which he regulates his intercourse with his fellow men.

The farmer was vastly delighted indeed with the acquisition. He observed to every person he met, that

that I was a tight little animal, and that I would do to carry him to markets and fairs. The helter-skelter young squire, said he, was, no doubt, more to blame than the poney, but added, it was an ill wind that blew nobody good; and that a broken leg had got him a nag. He led me into his homely stall, gave me some chaff, and a little musty hay, which was unsaleable. I tried it, and found it would satisfy nature; and I was convinced by experience, that, amidst the greatest abundance of the choicest food, and the assiduities of attendance, something more essential to happiness may still be deficient. I have heard that mankind, when unfortunate, suffer less from

what

what they are reduced to, than from the reflection on what they have lost. A transition from splendour to mediocrity, to them is intolerably grievous. They regard less the consciousness of felicity, than the opinion which the world attaches to situation; and hence half the misery of the race. But it does not become me to moralize, or to impeach their judgment; I only mean to show the difference between the sentiments of a man and a horse.

The honest farmer, though not a very fond, was a merciful master.—"Have you fed the poney?" was generally the first question he put to his carter in the morning. "Have you supped up the poney?" was the last

last he put at night. Sometimes I was indulged with the range of the orchard; and, if I tumbled on the grass, and from a dappled grey transformed myself to a dirty brown, I seldom had any pains taken to clean me. When the dirt was dry, it was wafted away by the wind; when my feet were covered with mire, they were washed in the pond.

The first time my new master commanded my services, it was to carry him to market at the nearest town. While he was engaged in his traffic, or regaling himself with strong beer, I was turned into an open stable with many others of my species, who came on the same errand; and being lower than any, I could scarcely

scarcely reach the rack in which the hay was put for our use. Of course I came in for a very small share of it; and besides, I was afraid of irritating more powerful animals; for whether we have been corrupted by our intercourse with man, or whether perverse nature is the same in the rational and irrational orders, as they are generally miscalled, there is an evident propensity in the strong to tyrannize over the weak; and as, among us, there are no laws to restrain aggression, the longest teeth, or the most powerful heels, generally extort a momentary submission. — Farther than the gratification of our immediate wants, our views extend not.

In the unvarying uniformity of a farmer's life there is not much room for description; and my hiſtory at this period is, of conſequence, very barren of incidents. I had the ſatisfaction to please from the very first trial; but I afterwards learned that my character had inspired my master with some degree of dread, and that for three or four market-days he returned sober, which was noticed by his family as a miracle. However, being convinced of my ſteadiness, and that I was qualified "to carry a fox," as it is termed, which I heard interpreted was a drunken man, he began to give a loose to his common failing, and made such copious libations, that, in the course of three

three or four miles, he frequently tumbled, sometimes over my head, sometimes over my heels, and not unfrequently took a sidelong position in the dirt. On these occasions I stood stock still, till he re-mounted; and I must do him the justice to say, he never blamed me for his misfortunes, but, on the contrary, praised my mild tractability, till I was almost vain of my performances, and had only to lament that I could not display them in an ampler field, and on more honourable occasions. I must allow I began to feel it a little degrading to be doomed to carry a greater beast than myself; for among all the vices ascribed to horses, ebriety never entered into the catalogue.

On the whole, however, I had little cause to complain of his treatment; for, during the six months I remained in his service, I never felt his spur, unless it was accidentally when he lost his balance, and kissed the road.

My fame now began to be blazoned, and established more than ever, and Dick was talked of, as I understood from the ostlers when they came to saddle me, at every ordinary where my master dined or got drunk. I began to fear that this favourable report would reach the squire, and that I should be again pressed into his service; but Fortune was more propitious, and I acknowledge the benignity of her decrees.

As

As the farmer was jogging along on me one day to market, we overtook a gentleman with his daughter mounted behind him. It seems she was dying of a consumption, and was advised to take exercise and air on horseback. Both admired me as soon as they set their eyes on me, rough and neglected as I appeared; and the former having expatiated on my good qualities, the gentleman told him how happy he should be to purchase me for the use of his daughter, if, on trial, I was found temperate and quiet. The farmer did not wish to part with me; but, out of regard to the unfortunate young lady, for he did not want humanity, and the temptation of a bit

or two of paper, the value attached to which was still more unaccountable to me than that of pieces of metal, he consented to let me go.—And here let me pause a few moments on my transfer. It was the first I had undergone, that did not give me a presentiment of ills, which I had not yet experienced; and the event did not frustrate hopes I indulged.

CHAP. XI.

DICK'S STRANGE SENTIMENTS ON THE CAUSES OF HUMAN MALADIES—DIPS IN SATIRE—PRAISES HIS MISTRESS—WHO FALLS A MARTYR TO CONSUMPTION—HER EPITAPH.

WHETHER it arises from their not eating hay and drinking water, like the more useful kinds of quadrupeds, I cannot pretend to determine; but certain it is, that the human race are subject to many maladies which we escape. They often die as soon as they are born, and few reach that period of longevity, which nature seems to have allotted them,

did they not counteract her intentions. I have often fancied too that they hastened fate by having recourse to means to prevent it. When ill, in general, they leave nothing to Nature, but trust wholly to art. An uncouth-looking kind of men, who disguise themselves in a mass of hair, to supply which, I imagine our tails and manes are so frequently robbed, are commonly applied to when any person falls sick. I have seen them occasionally lay hold of the patient's wrist, pull a round thing out of their breeches pocket, and look very grave, but never could understand the use of this ceremony. However, the conclusion always was, that the sick were enjoined to swallow something which

which could not be food, because it was not substantial enough, and was too unpleasant in its appearance to be intended for drink.

The charming but unfortunate young creature I had now the honour to serve, was attended by one of these magicians, who, indeed, had his black hair cut as close as my tail, but in other respects followed the customs and manners of his fraternity. I was told he pretended to be very clever ; and if abilities consist in talking well of himself, and ill of every body else, he certainly must have been a prodigy of perfection as to knowledge. I was astonished, however, that such a beautiful and delicate lady should

suffer

suffer a being of his appearance to come near her. When he opened his mouth, his teeth looked more formidable and jagged than a curry-comb, and his smile was so ghastly, that I was more than once in apprehension he intended to bite her. He visited her daily, however, and seemed to furnish her with almost every thing she ate or drank. He also rode out with her sometimes after I had the happiness to bear such a precious load; and I began to think he had as much regard for her as I had conceived; but, at last, understood he was only hired to drive away her consumption; and could it have been frightened by ugliness, her sufferings would have been of short duration,

and

and my felicity would have been complete.

Never did I experience such lenity and kindness before. My mistress was extremely light; she never wore a spur, and carried a whip in her hand more for ornament than for use. I now lived in higher stile than I had done with the squire; and instead of being confined to a nasty stable, I had free liberty to graze over several verdant fields. I was never wanted above two hours in a day; and at last the excursion was as pleasant to me, as I wished it might be beneficial to my rider. In this situation, however, there were some peculiarities which, at first, were rather strange to me. My

mistress

mistress did not sit astride, but her whole pressure was on one side.—This was rather irksome to me for a time; and I feared it might be inconvenient to her. Various and inexplicable are the customs of mankind, and this is one, which I am not qualified to account for.

The tenderness with which I was treated, endeared my mistress so much to me, that I followed her familiarly whenever she came into my pasture. I ate the grass from her delicate hand, and I thought it more sweet to the taste. Did she pat me, I was ready to die with pleasure; did she speak to me, I thought her voice more harmonious than the music of the groves.

Happy,

Happy, happy days! I still recal you with fresh delight; and the impression you made can never be effaced. I now felt myself a servant, and not a slave; every wish I was capable of forming was gratified, and I dreamed not that my present felicity was so near an end.

I began to perceive, however, that my mistress mounted me, with less animation, that she seemed to grow more and more feeble; but I had no idea I was soon to lose her for ever. Notwithstanding the shock-headed conjuror flattered her that she was mending, and redoubled his assiduity to make her swallow his prescriptions, she daily declined. I was less and less wanted, because

she

she was not able to use me. At last she was assisted to mount me, though, had I known her wishes, I would have lain down to raise her up. Her voice became fainter, her pat less hearty; and one day, after I had brought her home, and her father was assisting her to dismount, she made an effort to spring towards him, and immediately expired in his arms.

Never did I witness such a melancholy scene as this. The father stood in mute agony; his sorrows were too big for utterance: the mother raved in distraction. The whole family had fallen by the same deplorable malady in the opening bloom of youth. All the hopes of two affectionate parents had been em-

embarked on this last frail vessel, and now the wreck was total.

This was the first time I had seen the debt of nature exacted from any of her children; and never could it be paid by one who had less reason to dread settling the account. I grieved, however, for the mortal condition: the stroke of death seemed terrible. What a change did a moment produce! Those eyes that beamed benignity were for ever closed; that voice which sounded of music was for ever lost. Pale was the countenance once so fair, and the whole frame was cold and inert as its kindred earth.

I could neither demonstrate my grief for this irretrievable loss by ac-

tion or expression ; but I felt, in passive silence, more than eloquence itself could have expressed. The pasture and the stream lost their relish. Tears coursed one another down my face. Stare not reader, for a horse has tears ; and his feelings for the moment are as acute as yours ; but he neither increases his misery by painful retrospects on the past, or distant anticipations of the future. What he had once escaped, he knows can return no more ; what may happen in time to come, he is conscious that he is not wise enough to foresee, and has not power to prevent.

I saw my late dear mistress carried to the graye, and there was not a dry eye in the melancholy group. O

how

how attractive is goodness! Who would not wish to possess it, were it only for the love it inspires!

On this mournful occasion I became poetic. I did not mount on Pegasus, but I was Pegasus himself. The following lines were intended as an epitaph on my mistress:

Nipp'd by the chilling hand of death,
A lovely flower here withering lies;
The mortal part is lodg'd beneath,
The spirit mounted to the skies.

For sure in man's superior race,
Some portion must survive the grave;
Else why for fame the restless chase,
That prompts the good, the wise, the brave?

CHAP. XII.

APOSTROPHE TO IDLENESS.—THE FATAL CONSEQUENCES OF INDULGENCE—IS OBLIGED TO BE PUT UNDER THE MENAGE AGAIN.

IDLENESS, thou bane of every estimable quality, thou pander to every vice! in what colours of infamy oughtest thou to be painted, and how dangerous is it to indulge thy caresses! Beneath thy enervating blandishments every corruption springs up, and every virtue is obscured. It is thou that sinkest the love of honourable performances in the

the bed of inglorious ease. It is thou that holdest out the oblivious draught of what duty prompts to perform; and when once thy cup is tasted to intoxication, farewel every hope of fame, farewel every wish for distinction. Bound in thy fetters, talents, whether natural or acquired, are useless; and even the brightest qualities become tainted by folly, or contaminated by perverseness. I have seen the proud lords of Nature stoop to thy bewitchings, till they encumbered the very earth on which they trode, and only live to disgrace themselves and to be a burden to the community. Need it then be wondered at, gentle reader! that Dick the Poney yielded to the fascinations

of luxurious indolence, and forfeited the character he had acquired; forgot the lessons of Tom the Jockey, and became proud and ungovernable, in proportion as he was useless? What pangs did this want of reflection cost me! what misery is entailed on all who have given way to the allurements of ease!

After the death of my mistress I was turned into a fine pasture, where I soon forgot my loss, and became wanton with plenty. The parents of the deceased for some time could not bear to see me, as I reminded them too feelingly of their irremediable loss. I grew wild and untractable for want of exercise, and acquired such a load of flesh that I was quite

quite a burden to myself. I seemed wholly to forget that I had a part in existence to perform: I became languid by indulgence, and the very idea of exertion was painful, except when it was to show my capricious freaks, and to bid defiance to the groom when he meditated an approach.

But the season of grass and of sunshine passed away: the cold began to increase, the rains to fall; and I was glad to seek shelter in an hovel that was built in my little domain. Weakened by indulgence, every trifling inconvenience appeared in the light of a serious calamity. I neither enjoyed the same share of active spirits, nor the health that I had formerly

merly known. At last my master came to see me, and I beheld the tear start into his eyes as soon as he approached. "Poor animal," said he to himself, "I value you for the sake of my dear Eliza, and you shall never be ill-used by me; but I must not keep such a striking remembrance of my lost and lamented child."

These words, which I understood (for human language had now become intelligible to my ears), recalled me a little to my senses; and I foresaw some new scenes awaited me. I suffered myself, though not without opposition, to be caught; and I verily believe, had food continued in abundance, I should have been headstrong enough to resist to the last.

last. What a powerful persuader is hunger; Even man, I have heard, will condescend to sell his liberty for a dinner, and barter his independence for a debauch of wine.

Being put into the stable, I was again treated with hay and corn; but my obesity was so great, that I was thought incapable of being rode till I had been reduced. A black faced fellow, with an apron, soon visited me, and shod me again; in return for which I gave him a violent kick and laid him sprawling. But he soon had his revenge. He produced something in the form of a black ball, and, the groom assisting him, they forced it down my throat with a stick.

stick. This was repeated thrice, and I really imagined they intended to make an end of me; for though my appetite was not the best before, I felt it totally lost, and, besides, was sick as death. All my resistance was of no avail. When I bit my tor- mentors, they only practised fresh arts to show their superiority.

For a long time I could not conceive the meaning of this ceremony; but, when I found I was not killed, I began to imagine, that the ugly fellow I have mentioned, was one of those magicians who had attended my mistress; and that because mankind swallow poison, it was thought necessary that horses likewise should be

be drenched with it for their good. No doubt, my extreme indulgence in eating had given rise to this. Had I been more temperate I might have escaped this penance; but I learned wisdom from past sufferings. Happy for those that adopt the same conduct!

This was one evil that attended idleness; but a greater one was to be overcome. The groom was desired to ride me out. I felt this as an indignity; and scarcely was he seated, as he thought, before I tossed him into the air, and he fell at a considerable distance, howling with fear and pain. In a word, from long disuse and unlimited indulgence, I was become fiery and restive, and before I could bring my proud spirit

to

to submit, I was obliged to go through a variety of severe discipline; and, what aggravated my sufferings was, the reflection that I deserved it. My reputation for docility and steadiness, in which I had prided myself so much, was nearly lost for ever. It was concluded that I was not naturally what education had made me, and that ease would always recal my original disposition; but, as I had acquitted myself so well in the service of my dear departed mistress, the strictest orders were given not to use me ill, and by degrees I recovered all the good qualities which had procured me esteem; except that, as my strength was now confirmed by the lapse of six summers, I evinced

more resolution, and felt an ambition not to be out-done by larger and prouder animals. Idleness had brought me several distresses: ambition too, it will appear in the sequel, did not pass without chastisement.

CHAP. XIII.

A MARKET-TOWN DESCRIBED—DICK BORROWED BY A MISCHIEF-MAKING OLD MAID—GIVES AN UNFAVOURABLE ACCOUNT OF HER AND OF THE PEOPLE IN GENERAL—MEDITATES HIS DELIVERANCE FROM HER HANDS—RUNS A RACE—AND LEAVES HER ON A DUNGHILL.

WITHIN a short distance of my master's seat was what is called a market-town; that is, a place where a considerable number of houses are crowded together, and people in general having little business of their own to mind, *benevolently* employ themselves in meddling with that of others;

others; pass their time in visiting, and receive their principle pleasure from what is denominated gossipping: a talent confined wholly to the human race, and in which females are said to excel. A young lady, as she affected to be thought, though she had no signs of youth or loveliness remaining, a native of this place, happening to visit in my master's family, and taking a fancy to me, made some broad hints how much she should like to ride such a pretty creature; and, as it would have been unpolite to refuse her, particularly as I was not wanted, and was now quiet, I was consigned into her hands, with permission to use me as long as she liked.

For a short time after she possessed me, I was mounted every day; and she generally picked up a male companion, on an animal of my own kind, which made the little jaunts she took, no doubt, more pleasant to her, and certainly more agreeable to me. I cannot say, however, that I liked her manner; for though she wore no spur, she used the whip pretty freely, and was fond of curbing me to make me shew spirit, which, by the bye, I did not lack, in order to set herself off to advantage. She appeared very affected and malicious, and in every respect was the perfect contrast to my last dear mistress. I bore with her, however; but every day increased

creased my dislike to her. Animals have their partialities and their prejudices as well as their masters; but they are always founded in reason and justice. Let them say as much if they can.

When the pleasure of novelty was gone off, and she had tired all her acquaintances in accompanying her, I was sometimes left for a week in a nasty narrow stall, indifferently fed, and worse groomed. It seems, if I may believe what I heard the servant telling one of his companions, this lady was reputed an Old Maid; and though I have no conception of the meaning, I never shall like any thing that comes under that denomination. Her time was principal-

ly spent in collecting tittle-tattle in one house, and retailing it with additions in the next. She affected candour and good-will; but the maliciousness of her heart glared through the flimsy veil. It was less her object to attract love herself, than to prevent others from being beloved. She tortured her imagination to set friends at variance, and to blacken the reputation of the deserving, and particularly of the young and lovely of her own sex; yet it was more than insinuated by the servant, that it would be most prudent in her to observe a respectful silence, as he knew what he knew, but thought it best to hold his tongue, and wished she would do

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the same, or every door would be shut against her before she died.

It was quite impossible for a quadruped, like me, to discover what pleasure there could be in sowing dissention, and lacerating the ties that bind the great families of creation together. If one of our species gives another a kick or a bite from the momentary impulse of passion, we return it, if we are able, or learn to submit; but we neither know jealousy nor envy, nor do we think it raises our own merit to lessen that of another. In the race indeed we feel a generous emulation, and each exerts himself to the utmost to win the prize. Mankind have other sensations, it seems; their hearts are

not

not capable of such exalted sentiments as we are inspired with, or, at least, those who live in market-towns.

If two of our species meet, when free from restraint, we salute in our manner; but, in this place, the only town I ever lived in (and perhaps its customs were peculiar), I have seen people pass each other with an air of indifference or ill-nature, without ever opening their lips, or moving the head. I have heard also, that the inhabitants of a fine house will not enter a mean one, and that it is a degradation to some to shew the attentions of civility to others beneath them, not in size or make, but in dress and in *purse*, the grand

dis-

distinction between man and man, and the riddle of all riddles, which those who are endowed with reason alone can explain. This has ever puzzled me most of all, and I cannot help recurring to it whenever opportunity serves. I have seen an old woman, with hair as grey as my own tail, crooked and deformed into the bargain, pass a man nearly six feet high, without deigning to notice him; though he seemed to court her attention, and humble himself to compliment her. I have likewise seen two women, when they were obliged to meet, turn their heads different ways, that they might not see each other; and the handsome often give place to the ugly. Men,

I ob-

I observed, if their dress was nearly similar, though not of the same colour, would often join hands, and seemed pleased to meet; but women appeared to be less sociable. Thanks to nature I was not made a female!

In short, I was quite disgusted with the manners of this place, where the affectation of good will could not conceal the rankling enmity of the heart, and where little attention was paid even to disguise the most disgraceful passions that can agitate humanity. My present mistress, in particular, was the object of my aversion; and I eagerly watched for an opportunity to emancipate myself from a society where there

there was nothing but grimace and restraint. I longed for the verdant fields, the sweets of nature, and the sight of man, where he lives more according to her decrees.

Fortune at last befriended me. My old maid was invited by a fine day, and the proffered company of a young gentleman on a gay steed, twice my size, to take an airing. We pursued the beaten road, to avoid the trouble of opening gates. I happened to be foremost; and soon heard a horse thundering at my heels, as if ambitious to pass me. Immediately I set out full speed; the attendant pursued to stop me; the faster he rode, the faster I ran; for I was determined not to be out-

outdone. The third horse joined in the race: my rider screamed with fear, and tried in vain to pull me in. My native spirit, and my fixed aversion to my load, made me for a moment forget all the sage resolutions I had formed to practise submission. For a mile or two my tabby was sometimes on her seat, sometimes off; her cries were redoubled, but I wished to understand them as encouraging me to hasten my pace. She became quite exhausted with fatigue; and, as I was determined not to be outstripped, when she found all her exertions vain, she threw herself off on a dunghill, as I was passing full speed, and there lay soft and snug, covered with dirt,

till

till her companion lifted her up. The race being won, my ambition was fully gratified. All made a pause. I suffered myself to be caught, and after a severe whipping by the enraged gentleman, though he probably enjoyed my feat in secret, I was quietly led back; for my rider was determined to mount me no more.

I now began to ponder on the consequences of this sally. I concluded my character would again suffer; but unfortunately it was raised by the exploit, and I paid dear for my ambition to excel. With what different optics do mankind behold actions, and how variously do they appreciate them! They frequently condemn without cause; they praise without merit!

CHAP. XIV.

FARTHER DELINEATIONS OF THE ANTIQUATED VIRGIN—DICK IS GIVEN TO THE SON OF A GENTLEMAN WHO KEEPS HARRIERS—ACQUITS HIMSELF WITH CREDIT IN THE FIELD—REFLECTIONS ON HUNTING—WITH A QUOTATION FROM THOMSON.

MY old maid having taken care to fall soft, as the reader has already been informed, felt no personal injury beyond the alarm; and after ſweetening herself and changing her dress, hastened to call on all her acquaintances, that she might have the pleasure of receiving their formal congratulations on her happy escape. The compliments paid her on this occasion, however I have reason to think, were rather *affected* than *real*; for

for several came to pat and caress me for the exploit, and the laugh went heartily round at the expense of the vain mischief-making creature, whom I had left, as it was remarked, in the only situation fit for her,—that was, on a dunghill.

The following Epigram went round on this occasion:

Serpents in dunghills hide their heads,
Of noxious reptiles, feather beds
SQUINTINDA to the class allied,
Here dropt her venom and her pride;
But dropt them only to increase,—
For vipers rush'd to her embrace.

However, her malice and rage at having such a scurvy trick played her, made the consequences no joking matter to me. She actually interdicted the servant from giving me any thing to eat, on pain of his being discharged; and for a part

of a day and one entire night, I had nothing more than a wisp of hay, which humanity taught the poor fellow to bring in his pocket when he found some plausible excuse to enter the stable. I was not ungrateful for his kindness; and from the general favour I had obtained by my late conduct, I foresaw that I should not be left long enough in the hands of my tabby, to be quite starved, though I was sure to suffer all that her cruelty could inflict.

Indeed the more she abused me the more my fame was raised; and among those who new her, had I broken her neck, I verily believe I should have been considered as a benefac-

tor,

tor, even by those who seemed to condole with her the most.

Next day a young gentleman desired to see me, and I immediately recognized him as the rider of the horse that had occasioned my running the race. It appeared he lived in the neighbourhood, was the eldest son of a country squire who kept harriers, and was so pleased with my performance, that he obtained premission of his father to inquire if I were to be parted with. An intimate acquaintance subsisting between his family and that of my late dear mistress whom I had lost for ever, he was told, as the old maid had declined using me any more, that he might have me and welcome; on condition that he would use me

well, and never suffer me to go into improper hands. To all this he readily assented, and made the fairest protestations, with many thanks to my owner, and encomiums, as I heard, on myself; praising my spirit and my paces and throwing all the blame on the awkwardness of my rider, whom he thought right served for being so frisky.

The youth having explained the cause of his errand, and finding my tabby heartily glad to get rid of me, I was delivered into his hands, with abundance of cautions from my late rider to be on his guard, and some expressions of wonder, that his father should suffer him to mount such an untractable and vicious creature. All this weighed nothing with him.

him. The more she said to disparage me, the more he admired me.

I was again put under a careful groom, well lodged, well fed, and well attended; and though the youth in whose hands I had fallen, loved to ride fast, in which I indulged him, he never used me ill, nor treated me capriciously. In a short time he returned to school, and left the most positive charge with the groom to get me in good condition for hunting, by his next holydays. This was punctually complied with; I had good living, and only gentle exercise; and began to long for the pastime of the chase, of which I had heard so much, and which few such diminutive animals as myself are thought worthy to enjoy.

Christ-

Christmas arrived. My young master came home, and visited me almost before he could pay his respects to his parents. He was perfectly satisfied with my appearance; and next morning I was taken into the field.

When the harriers set off in full cry, I confess I felt an animation equal to my rider, and kept up with the best and proudest steeds that were engaged in the same pursuit. The hunters had what they call a good day's sport, that is, they rode about a dozen miles, and killed two poor hares, led on by the dogs and a man in green coat, who carried a horn, and appeared to be their general; but his stile and title is huntsman; though dogsman would

be

be more proper. I performed to admiration, and received compliments enough to make me vain. My master certainly was vain of me, and this gave me more sincere pleasure than any thing that could be said in my own favour.

To give satisfaction to others is the surest way to be happy ourselves: this maxim I early learned, though it must be allowed I was sometimes too inadvertent to practise it. Fortunate it is for those who learn it soon, and follow it long.

Again and again I was taken into the field; and though in proportion as the novelty of the scene wore off, the chase appeared less enchanting, I never felt it irksome, except when I was pushed too hard, or rode too long.

long. I have often been surprised, however, that the sons of reason should be so much attached to a pastime which bids defiance to *reason*, and is not unattended with *cruelty*. The piteous shriek of the hare has often pierced my heart, and I regretted that I was made an instrument, however humble, in a pursuit where pain was certainly inflicted, and so little advantage gained. Men, I know, live on animal food; but there are various more expeditious, more humane, and less expensive ways of obtaining it than, by pursuing it with horses and dogs. It seems indeed some of the human race have too much sensibility and refinement to justify or practise hunting. I have heard a person of this

this character repeating the following lines, which have often occurred to me during a warm chase :

" Poor is the triumph o'er the timid hare !
Scar'd from the corn, and now to some lone seat
Retir'd ; the rushy fen, the ragged furze ;
Stretch'd o'er the stony heath, the stubble chapt
The thirsty lawn, the thick entangled broom;
Of the same friendly hue the wither'd fern ;
The fallow ground laid open to the sun,
Concoctive ; and the nodding sandy bank
Hung o'er the mazes of the mountain brook ;
Vain is her best precaution, though she sits
Conceal'd, with folded ears, unsleeping eyes,
By Nature form'd to take the horizon in,
And head couch'd close beneath her hairy feet,
In act to spring away. The scented dew
Betrays her early labyrinth , and deep,
In scatter'd sullen openings, far behind.
With every breeze she hears the coming storm :
But nearer and more frequent, as it loads
The sighing gale, she springs amaz'd, and all
The savage soul of game is up at once :
The pack full opening, various ; the shrill horn

Resounded

Resounded from the hills, the neighing steed,
Wild for the chase; and the loud hunters shout,
O'er a weak, harmless, flying creature, all
Mix'd in mad tumult and discordant joy."

CHAP. XV.

A FOX-CHASE DESCRIBED.—DICK ALMOST BROKEN DOWN, AND TURNED TO GRASS. —SOME SAGE REFLECTIONS FOR A HORSE.

BY degrees I was cured of that miserable passion of ambition, which had induced me to shew my fleetness at the expense of my ease; but I had not yet sufficiently smarted for it. I had gained the character of being one of the swifteſt and safest ponies that ever followed a pack of harriers; but though this might flatter my vanity, I soon found that it

 exposed

exposed me to a train of evils which I could not have expected as its consequences.

The young squire, every time he returned from school, became heavier and heavier; yet, instead of allowing me to go more gently, he took a pride in often wantonly riding me at the most furious rate, merely to try what I could perform, and to boast of the exploit. I had every inclination to gratify all his *reasonable* wishes, because I was satisfied that the heedless impetuosity of youth, not any depravity of heart, made him try me beyond my strength and my powers; but I soon found that the more studious I was to oblige, the more I was put upon,

and

and that I only gained credit for ability, instead of being praised for exerted services which I was not formed to bear. I called up all my resolution to support my reputation in the face of the world; but my heart was full of dismay when I reflected how much more I might have to endure.

The second winter after I fell into the hands of this young gentleman, another scene was opened. Weary of the dull routine, as he termed it, of hare-hunting, he aspired to nobler game, and I was taken to a fox-chase. The company here appeared to me to be of a higher order than what I had been accustomed to see when I attended the harriers;

the horses and dogs were also larger and finer; and the leader of the pack, or the huntsman, had an assistant, as he is called, to bring up the rear.

From the preparation that was made to take the field, and the anxiety that was shewn on breaking cover, I vainly imagined that some formidable animal was to be started, and that a prize worthy of such expensive parade was to be won.—Judge then what was my surprise, when I heard the most violent shouts of triumph from the hunters, and saw only a poor little creature with a long tail, flying from the pursuit of about twenty couple of hounds, and as many men and horſes! Surely, thought

thought I, there must be ſome important value in this diminutive animal—perhaps it might furniſh the ſubſtance that is used to fill a purſe, perhaps it might be a feaſt for an epicure; or, if of leſs conſequence in itſelf, I imagined, at leaſt, that its death was a public benefit, and its life one of the moſt deſtructive nuiſances to the human race.

Gentle reader! you will ſmile at my ſimplicity in forming ſuch extravagant ideas; but if Dick may be allowed to ſpeak his mind, he has more reaſon to ſmile at the egregious folly of man.

I carried my rider with great ſpirit, that I might ſee the event of this ſingular purſuit. By good fortune I

was in at the death, and I was all attention to witness the catastrophe. which, I confess, baffled all my surmises and conjectures. The dogs having worried the wretched object of pursuit with savage joy, the huntsman immediately alighted, cut off the tail, or the brush, as I heard it termed, and handing it to one of the sportsmen, he came up and smeared my young master's face with the bloody stump, and then gave him the lacerated member to stick in his hat, to carry home as a trophy of victory.

At first I fancied the hunters meant to insult my rider, and I was shy of suffering them to approach him; but when I found he was pleased

pleased with the compliment of a bloody face and a brush in his hat, I began to alter my opinion, and concluded there must be some magic in the ceremony; and that he was now invested with a talisman against every future ill.

On this head I never could obtain any satisfactory information. Though I had frequently the honour of joining in a fox-chase, its object and its end were never explained to my comprehension: the brush seemed the sole object of ambition, and the only reward of victory. The dogs generally mangled the carcase, and the company returned, as far as I could learn, just as wise and rich as they went, except that they had

had fatigued themselves and their horses.

The hare, I believe, is eaten by men; but the fox seems fit only for dogs; yet he is pursued, or rather persecuted, with an animosity that is really astonishing; and men and horses often risque their lives in a furious contention who shall be present when the brush is to be amputated. I have been told that this disgusting appendage to the rump of the fox is frequently dipped into the jovial bowl that crowns the feats of the day, probably to heighten its flavour: be this as it may, from every testimony, as well as from ocular proofs, the brush is the

the only prize that is thought worth carrying away.

Whatever credit I had gained at first by my performance in the field, I soon found it impossible to preserve it, even with my most anxious endeavours. In proportion as my master gained strength I lost the ability to carry him to his wishes. He became sensible of this; and, after almost breaking me down, by which he revenged the tumble I gave my tabby rider, though without intending it, and made me pay very dearly for my pride in running a race; I was turned into a paddock to recover my strength and freshness, and he mounted a taller and stouter steed in my room.

Not-

Notwithstanding I had reason to rejoice at my emancipation, I felt some mortification at being superseded. I idly regretted that I was not made as large and as strong as the noblest animals of my species; not considering that merit does not consist in superior power or appearance, but in a faithful discharge of those duties for which we are fitted by the Parent of all. I had found that I was not useless in the scale of being; and this ought to have satisfied me without aspiring to distinctions for which I was never designed, and to offices which I could neither fill with pleasure to myself or advantage to others.

This dissatisfaction, however, with our

our allotments, I apprehend, runs through all nature. I have heard a groom murmuring because he was not a squire, to ride about and take his pleasure; and a footman, that he was obliged to wait on his master at table, when he was hungry himself, and wished to sit down and eat. These considerations soon restored me to myself; and I learned to enjoy the relaxation which I had gained from toil, without embittering my present bliss, by vain retrospects, or useless anticipations. To what trials I might be next exposed it was impossible for me to guess. I experienced no diminution of attention on the part of my master, and I hoped the best as to my future destiny.

CHAP. XVI.

DICK PHILOSOPHISES AGAIN—IS PUT IN TRAINIG—PITTED AGAISNT OTHER PONIES TO RUN A RACE—FALLS IN THE MOMENT OF VICTORY, AS OTHER HEROES HAVE SOMETIMES DONE

SPRING had now renovated the earth for the ſeventh time ſince I firſt opened my eyes on Hounslow Heath, and became a partaker of exiſtence. I had already gone, as the reader will perceive, through many viciſſitudes of fortune, and at times had cauſe to complain of her unkindness; but on the whole I muſt confeſs I had as much to be thankful for as other animals, many of which

which come into the world only to be reared, and then eaten by men. Other services are exacted of our race; and if our labour is sometimes hard, the privilege of life is seldom denied us as long as we are able to work. On a comparison, therefore, of the fate of horses, with that of other domestic animals, the advantage seems to be on our side, particularly in this respect. I am grateful on this account that I was made a horse rather than a cow or a sheep; but perhaps it is difficult to estimate the blessings or the ills we cannot personally feel; and certainly it is wisdom to be content with the station for which each individual was born.

The enjoyment of ease and plenty of pasture soon restored me to strength and spirits, and I felt myself more vigorous than ever. I frequently gallóped round the enclosure by way of exercise; and when my master came to visit me, I generally gave him a specimen of my fleetness. Whether my own folly suggested the idea, or whether his vanity was the prime mover of what happened in the sequel, I cannot tell; but, after getting into high condition, I was suddenly taken from the verdent field, in which I had been allowed to range without control, cooped up again in a stable, and forced to swallow something which made me very sick, and reduced my

size

size nearly to what it was when I was dismissed from the toils of hunting. During the operation of repeated doses of the nauseous draughts that were forcibly crammed down my throat, because I was not silly enough to run the risk of being poisoned voluntarily, the groom rode me out every day, and kept me at a very short allowance of food and water.

From these preparations, I began to suspect that fresh adventures awaited me; that I was doomed to carry my master in pursuit of some other kind of game, which I had never yet seen; or that I was to be sent to catch it myself. This incertitude occasionally disturbed my rest; but,

finding that I was again liberally fed, and carefully dressed, I did not suffer anxiety to depress my spirits, or lessen my gratifications.

The groom having performed his part of the business, my master, who had now grown a tall stripling, frequently exercised me himself, trying how fast I could go for a short distance, and then a longer one, pressing me with such vivacity, that I could not forbear fancying he was training me to outstrip the winged inhabitants of the air. Every time I got to the end of the space in which he rode me, he pulled something very pretty out of his pocket, and, as far as I can judge, it told him how far I had gone in a certain time. I

have heard this toy called a watch, and, as time is so valuable to mankind, they seem universally to wear it, and, no doubt, use it to warn them against the misapplication of the most precious of all things; yet, without any trouble or expense, the rising of the sun might tell them when to commence the duties of the day, and its setting, to retire to rest. For my own part, I wanted no other monitor; but the human race appear to be governed by other maxims, or to be inevitably subject to other laws; many of them never stir abroad till the splendid orb, that lights the earth, has reached the meridian, nor seek repose till the noon of night.

But I am wasting time, which is of such inestimable value, by descanting on the manners of men, when I ought to be pursuing my own narrative.

It is probable I gave my rider complete satisfaction, for, after trying my speed a few days, he ordered the groom to lead me, one evening, to a certain place in the vicinity of an extensive velvet plain, and to take good care of me till he arrived next morning. My heart now misgave me, but I was passive to his commands.

In the same stable where I was obliged to pass the night, I found other little animals of my own stamp, apparently assembled for the same purpose

purpose. Each had an attendant; and, from their conversation, it was not long before I received some intimation of the business that had occasioned our being brought together.

It appeared that my young master, proud of my fleetness and of his own horsemanship, had betted a certain sum with three of his juvenile companions, that he would ride me a certain distance against any ponies they could produce. It seems this is a fashionable amusement among persons who have a *full purse* and an *empty head*; but, if I mistake not, the *heart* must likewise be wrong, to strain poor dumb animals to the utmost, merely to profit by their pains, or to boast of

reaching

reaching a certain spot a few minutes before their competitors in the race can come up.

Soon as the morning dawned, all the grooms were busily employed in dressing and feeding their respective charges; and, in due time, we were led to the scene of action, where a vast concourse of people was assembled, full of eager expectation, as if the fate of nations had been to be decided by the event of the day.

At this sight, I felt inspired with resolution to acquit myself with credit, and to strain every nerve to win the prize. All eyes were upon us, and various opinions were given by the spectators on our supposed abilities;

lities: I had the satisfaction to find that I was a general favourite, though less than any of my rivals.

After a short interval of suspence, each young gentleman mounted his own poney, and, at a signal given, we set out. The impetuosity of my rider had almost thrown me down at the commencement of the race; but I endeavoured, as well as possible, to rectify his mistakes; and, though he spurred and whipped me in the most unmerciful, manner, I reflected that this was not a time to flinch, or to show resentment.

Sometimes I was before, sometimes a little behind, my competitors, but commonly kept nearly in a line with them. Their superior strength evidently

evidently gave them some advantages, after we had galloped with the utmost speed for some considerable way: one of the riders, however, by a sudden jerk, brought himself and his horse to the ground, I availed myself of the confusion this occasioned to take the lead, which I retained for some distance; but finding myself exhausted, my rivals were rapidly gaining on me, and I verily believe that, had the course been much longer, I must have given in. Just, however, as one of my rivals had reached my neck, I made a last effort to disappoint him, and, with a kind of desperation, took a sudden spring as I was passing a white post, and not being able to recover myself

self, fell flat on the ground beyond it, and rolled over my rider. Shouts and huzzas proclaimed me victor, and though my master was seriously bruised, and the blood streamed from his nose, the triumph he had won, in the very moment when it was about to be snatched from his grasp, consoled him so much, that he seemed insensible to his sufferings.

His father, who had rather weakly permitted than sanctioned this gambling and dangerous pastime, now came up, and affectionately descanting on his son's narrow escape from destruction, insisted on it that he should never ride another race, nor use me again in any form,

as

as my strength was evidently not equal to his weight. "One act of folly," said he, "and not to pay too dearly for its consequences, ought to be enough. The bet you have won shall be distributed among our poor in bread; for I would disown a son who was mean enough to put money in his pocket, gained by such disreputable means."

CHAP. XVII.

PRESENTED TO AN AMIABLE YOUTH IN A LINGERING CONSUMPTION — HIS CHARACTER — CONDUCT — AND GRADUAL DECLINE—THE CATASTROPHE—PATERNAL DISTRESS—AND AN EPITAPH.

FROM scenes of wanton pastime, or heedless dissipation, I now passed to one of such a melancholy and affecting nature, that the impression it made on me can never be effaced. Though it has been my lot, on various occasions, to promote the pleasures of the gay, it always af-

forded me a higher gratification to be in any degree instrumental in alleviating the ills of the wretched. I have known ills myself, and have learned to sympathize with the sufferings of mankind, which I soon witnessed in all their poignancy.

Soon after my return from the race, a person dressed in black, who went by the name of the clergyman, came to enquire how my young master was after his tumble, and was pathetically lamenting the situation of his eldest son whom he had been obliged to remove from a public school, on account of an incipient consumption, the mortal enemy as it appears of youth and innocence.

The

The old squire immediately recommended exercise on horseback, and as he did not want humanity, and was glad of so good an opportunity of disposing of me to advantage, offered me to carry the poor-youth. My young master, who it seems had been a playfellow of his, cordially joined in this benevolent design, and made a free gift of me to his unhappy friend. I saw the tear of gratitude start in the clergyman's eye; by an involuntary impulse he grasped the hands of his kind benefactor; while silence expressed his thanks. He was too much affected to do more.

Accordingly I was sent to his

house the same evening completely equipped; and though I perceived from the accommodations, that I was now in the hands of a man who lived in a stile of humble mediocrity, I felt myself perfectly at ease. Here I made myself sure that I should not be hardly used.

The sick youth came to see me almost immediately, and the lambent flame of joy lighted his eyes at the thought of being master of such a prize. The idea of my former loved mistress was instantly presented to me. In mild complacency of look, in elegance of form, and beauty of features; he was her exact counterpart. I was attached to him at the first sight,

sight, and wished in secret that my services might be available to restore him.

He daily rode me out when the weather was fine, for an hour or two, and seemed so fond of me, that his countenance brightened up at the moment I was brought out. He caressed me so much, spoke to me in such soft and gentle accents, and was so pleased to feed me out of his hand, that my affection for him encreased to a degree I had never felt before, and I thought myself completely happy in the hands of such an amiable master. The most pleasant rides were constantly selected, and not unfrequently he alight-

ed to collect flowers and plants in the hedges and fields, which he carried home with him, as I understood, to examine and ascertain their names and qualities.—While thus engaged, I was suffered to graze at liberty, for he had such confidence in me, and it was not misplaced, that he never thought it necessary to lay me under any restraint. I loved him too well indeed to give him pain or trouble, and we were mutually pleased with each other.

The father sometimes attended us on a large horse, and sometimes walked, and laid his hand on my neck. He seemed to have a sincere regard for me likewise, on account

account of his dear boy's partiality, and never did I see parental affection more strongly exemplified than in his whole conduct. All his attention, and all his care, were exerted to promote the recovery of his son; and if I may be allowed to judge of the hearts of human beings, never was there a youth who more eminently deserved a father's love, or who experienced it in a higher degree.

That health, however, which seemed dearer to him than his own, unfortunately did not mend as was wished and expected. In consequence, it was judged expedient to alter their situation for what is called change of air, a mode

mode of cure which it seems is frequently prescribed for human maladies.

Accordingly I was taken by gentle stages to a great distance, and here I first beheld that immense collection of waters called sea, and a kind of moving houses filled with men and wafted by the wind. The clergyman now constantly attended us on foot, for it seems he had not a horse for himself to ride, and he never suffered my dear master to go a step without him. New scenes for a time seemed to amuse and to invigorate my rider. New plants and flowers, and new productions on the sea shore, served to exercise his taste for investiga-

ting

ting the qualities of nature; but his amendment was slight, and of short duration; and I began to anticipate the worst.

After staying from home an indefinite time, we set out again on our return. It filled me with melancholy to think, that more ardent benefit had not been received from an excursion, which was undertaken purely on this hope, and which must have cost dear to a man who had given up every thing for the welfare of his child.

At home the same scenes were renewed as before; but I could perceive that my master was daily becoming more feeble. Some little time after this, he was assisted to walk,

walk, and to mount me; but it always gave him such pleasure to be on my back, and to caress me, that he strove against his illness with the utmost fortitude; and seemed as far as possible to conceal his sufferings, that they might not prevent his going abroad, and that they might not wound his father, whose tenderness was witnessed in every action, and who frequently wore the smile of hope in his presence, but turned in an agony of despair.

By degrees winter came on, and nature put on her most unlovely hues. The weather became generally such, that I could not be used but rarely with pleasure or profit, and

and my dearly beloved master was apparently sinking into an untimely grave. The last time that he rode me, I saw his father burst into tears, as if conscious of his approaching loss, and patting me, said, "Poor Dick, I wish your master was as able to ride, as you are willing to carry him. But I hope he will soon mend." His words were choaked in the utterance: he knew not how to dissemble his sensations; yet he was not capable of destroying hope, the last hold of the miserable.

After this the dear youth was wholly confined to his room; yet he wished me sometimes to be taken to the window, that he might feast his eyes by looking at me. This however

ever did not last long; I found that he became too languid to rise, and the tears and lamentations of the family soon convinced me that he was no more.

This was the second time I had felt such a distressing separation; and could my life have ransomed that of this amiable boy, gladly would I have sacrificed it for his sake. My attachment to him was extreme, as his was to me. Indeed he was all humanity and fondness, and was incapable of using any thing ill that breathed. Even the servant who attended me, shed tears in abundance, and lamented in the most pathetic terms the death of his young master; but the first time the father saw

me, after the heart-rending event, I thought he was distracted. He threw his arms round my neck in frantic woe, "Oh William! William!" exclaimed he, "dearest and best beloved, never, never more shall I have the pleasure of accompanying you on this poor creature; but you are happy! while I am left to struggle with misery which has been my constant lot; but we shall soon meet again:

A tie to earth with thee, dear youth is gone;
A tie to heaven with thee dear youth is flown.
O as a father lifts his streaming eyes,
And views your home, the bright empyrial skies,
May fond reflection on his WILLIAM'S bliss,
Allure to brighter worlds and wean from this.
To reach thy raptures be it all his care,
And all his pride to suffer and to bear.

CHAP. XVIII.

PRESENTED TO A FAMILY OF DISTINCTION —TRANSFERRED FROM ONE BROTHER TO ANOTHER—AS A REWARD FOR HIS SERVICES HAS A PADDOCK AND A SHED FOR LIFE—ARGUMENTS FOR CONTENTMENT—CONCLUSION.

NO sooner was the mind of the unhappy father, whose heavy loss I have mentioned, a little composed, and time had applied its lenient balm to a wound, which I have reason to think could never be wholly closed, than he consigned me to the eldest son of the heir-apparent of one

one of the firſt fortunes and titles in the kingdom. It appears he had been honoured with some share of countenance and patronage from the family; and gratitude prompted him to shew that he was not unmindful of the obligations he lay under; thought the only return he could make was DICK, the little poney.

In placing me, however, in such an eligible situation, he no doubt consulted his own feelings, and was happy to reward the faithful ſervant of his ever-to-be-lamented boy, by a provision which he concluded would be permanent, and a service that he knew would be easy.

His recommendation ensured my favourable reception. A good intro-

duction is all that merit wants. I speedily became a favourite of my little master, who was only about six years of age; and young as he was, no fears were entertained when he was first set on his back. My duty was merely to carry him short and pleasant rides round his father's park; for he always went in a carriage, when it was necessary to take a distant journey. He was one of the sweetest children I ever saw; and I soon perceived that in this family I should be as happy as I could wish. They seemed to have no taste for fox-hunting or racing; for frivolous pursuits or criminal dissipation. Happy in domestic society and the company of a few friends, they seemed to enjoy life

life in the most rational manner; and I participated in their felicity. In winter I was always carefully lodged and attended: in summer I had the range of a fine paddock, where I was able to take care of myself. The follies and frolics of youth had now been wholly subdued in me by age and experience; and I pleased because I studied to please.

In this agreeable service there was so much uniformity, that the seasons revolved without any material alteration in my enjoyments or my duties. The only incident by which my life was now marked, was being transferred from one brother to another younger, for there were several. As one grew up, he was mounted on a

larger animal, and I fell to the lot of the next. Thus I had the honour of initiating a family of the first distinction in the rudiments of horsemanship; and I found no diminution of attention in my elder master, when I was given to a younger. All alike amiable in disposition, and trained up in habits of regularity, benevolence and virtue, I knew not to whom I was most partial, or who most deserved my praise. Every want was now supplied in the most liberal manner,—every wish of my heart was full.

The poor clergyman who had been the cause of my good fortune, occasionally visited in the family; and never did he behold me, but the tears

tears trickled down his cheeks. He gradually sunk into dejection and melancholy, and became decrepid before his time. Often have I lamented that it was not in my power to provide for his happiness, as amply as he had for mine; but the lacerated ties of nature in him could never be healed; he seemed cast in a mould different from the common race of men: his sorrows were costly, but I fear his joys were few.

By the time that the honourable young family I served had all grown too big for such a little animal to carry them, I had seen eighteen winters pass over my head; and my natural grey received an additional colouring from years. Still, however, I was active

active and strong, and might have endured more labour; but it was a maxim in this worthy family, never to distress an old and faithful servant, nor to discharge him when he had spent the best of his days in their service. Would all masters and mistresses adopt the same benevolent plan, they would find the gratitude of their dependants keep pace with the generosity that provided for their wants; they would find the assiduous application of health and strength striving to compensate for the expected support of illness and debility. Happy are those who are born to servitude, that have the good fortune to fall into such hands; happy was it for me that my humble endeavours

deavours to please and to be useful, met with such a bountiful recompense.

My shoes being taken off, in testimony of my being exonerated from farther duty, I was turned into a fertile paddock, with some other veterans of my species; and now I enjoyed plenty without labour, and peace without the fear of change. We had a commodious shed in one corner of our domain, to which we retired from the heat of the sun, or the cold of winter. When grass was plenty, we provided abundantly for ourselves; when the season stripped the fields of verdure, we were liberally fed. Nothing, however, delighted me more than to see my former masters come to visit and pat me.

me. Even animals do not like to be forgot or neglected, by those whom they have studied to oblige.

In this happy relaxation from care; this blissful emancipation from restraint, there were no occurrences that could either amuse or instruct. I associated much with my kind; and to relieve the languor of uniform, unvarying enjoyment, we mutually communicated to each other the principal circumstances of our lives. On comparing my lot with that of others of my species, I found abundant reason to be thankful on the whole, that I had not suffered more. Life, I find, is checquered with good and ill; mankind are born to calamities as well as horses; and though

though they often capriciously treat us, our advantages in many respects are greater than theirs, our hearts less susceptible of wrong. At least, on a review of what I have endured, and what I have enjoyed, I acquiesce in my own allotments: and am grateful to destiny. Contentment is true wisdom, because it conduces to felicity; and gratitude for good received, is an evidence that it has in some measure been deserved.

The burden of age now begins to retard my speed, and to sink my spirits; but assured that I shall be allowed to breathe my last in peace, I neither fear nor anticipate the final event. Anxious, however, that my humble memoirs may record my thank-

thankfulness to all my benefactors, and my forgiveness of those who have wronged me: I have put them into the hands of one, whose kindness I have already acknowledged, and who has promised to lay them before the public. Should that public find entertainment in my story, or profit by my occasional remarks, the fame of DICK will, perhaps, be more permanent, and at least more sure, than that of some of those who have proudly bestrode his back!

EPILOGUE

EPILOGUE.

WE cannot better conclude the Memoirs of Little Dick, than with the pathetic address of a superannuated horse to his master, who had sentenced him to be shot, in order to abridge the sufferings of a lingering death The elegant pen of Mr. Pratt, always devoted to the higher interests of feeling and humanity, has rendered this incident peculiarly interesting to sensibility; and though with regard to brutes, the duration of life after it cannot be enjoyed, is only protracted ill, yet we cannot help applauding and admiring that

generous concern for any thing that breathes, which is displayed in allowing it the fruition of existence till nature ceases to perform her functions.

In this point of view, though we cannot blame the man that would condemn a worn-out, favourite horse to an instant death, when the object is to lessen pain; yet we love him more, who furnishes his old servant with all that his simple appetites demand, till the final period of life. Our ideas of what is due to animals, ought in some measure to be taken from what is due to our own kind; else we shall often fail in an essential branch of humanity in what respects them.

AND

AND hast thou fix'd my doom, sweet master, say?
And wilt thou kill thy servant, old and poor?
A little longer let me live, I pray,
A little longer hobble round thy door.

For much it glads me to behold this place,
And house within this hospitable shed;
It glads me more to see my master's face,
And linger near the spot where I was bred.

For oh! to think on what we both enjoyed,
In my life's prime, ere I was old and poor!
When from the jocund morn to eve employ'd
My gracious master on this back I bore.

Thrice told ten years, have danced on down along,
Since first these way-worn limbs to thee I gave;
Sweet smiling years! when both of us were young,
The kindest master and the happiest slave.

Ah! years sweet smiling, now for ever flown,
Ten years thrice told, alas! are as a day;
Yet as together we are aged grown,
Let us together ware our age away

For still the times long past, are dear to thought,
And rapture mark'd each minute as it flew
To youth, and joy, all change of seasons brought
Pains that were soft, or pleasures that were new.

Ev'n when thy love-sick heart felt fond alarms,
Alternate throbbing with it's hopes and fears,
Did I not bear thee to thy fair one's arms,
Assure thy faith, and dry up all thy tears?

And hast thou fix'd my death, sweet Master, say?
And wilt thou kill thy servant, old and poor?
A little longer let me live I pray
A little longer hobble round thy door.

Ah! could'st thou bear to see thy servant bleed,
Ev'n tho' thy pity has decreed his fate?
And yet, in vain thy heart for life shall plead,
If nature has deny'd a longer date.

Alas! I feel, 'tis *nature* dooms my death,
I feel, too sure, 'tis *pity* deals the blow;
But ere it falls, O Nature! take my breath;
And my kind Master shall no bloodshed know.

Ere the last hour of my allotted life,
A softer fate shall end me old and poor;
Timely shall save me from the uplifted knife
And gently stretch me at my master's door.

FINIS.

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